

Winter Season Watches, Advisories & Warnings

Winter Storm Watch

Issued when conditions are favorable for the development of a hazardous winter weather event which has the potential to threaten life or property in the next 12 to 48 hours.

Blizzard Watch

Issued when conditions are favorable for the development of blizzard conditions in the next 12 to 48 hours:

- a. Wind: Sustained wind or frequent gusts of 35 mph or higher
- b. Visibility: 1/4 mile or less with falling snow OR blowing snow
- c. Time: 3 Hours or greater

Wind Chill Watch

Issued when conditions are favorable for the development of wind chill values of -25 degrees °F or colder in the next 12 to 48 hours.

Freezing Rain/Drizzle Advisory

Issued for freezing rain when ice accumulations less than 0.25" are expected to cause problems for pedestrians and motorists within the next 24 hours.

Winter Weather Advisory

Issued for a winter weather event in which there is one or more of the following hazards present:

1. Snow accumulations of 2.5 to 5.0 inches
2. Blowing and/or Drifting Snow (*wind gusts usually in the 25-34 mph range*)
3. Sleet (*ice pellets*) accumulations of less than 0.5"
4. Freezing rain (*with less than 0.25" of ice thickness*) mixed with snow and/or sleet

Wind Chill Advisory

Issued when wind chill values will reach -15°F to -24°F within the next 24 hours.

Blizzard Warning

Issued for sustained wind or frequent gusts greater than or equal to 35 mph accompanied by falling and/or blowing snow, frequently reducing visibility to less than 1/4 mile for three hours or more.

Ice Storm Warning

Issued when a period of freezing rain is expected to produce ice accumulations of 1/4" or greater, or cause significant disruptions to travel or utilities, usually in the next 24 hours.

Winter Storm Warning

Issued for a winter storm in which there is one or more of the following hazards present:

1. Heavy snow accumulations of 6.0 inches or greater within 12 hours, or a prolonged snowfall of 8.0 inches or greater in 24 hours.
2. Heavy sleet (*ice pellets*) accumulations of 0.5" or greater
3. Freezing rain mixed with heavy snow and/or heavy sleet

Wind Chill Warning

Issued when wind chill values will reach -25°F or colder usually in the next 24 hours.

Non-Precipitation Watches, Advisories & Warnings

High Wind Watch

Issued when conditions are favorable for a widespread storm system to produce sustained wind of 40 mph or higher for at least one hour and/or wind gusts (not from thunderstorms) around 60 mph or higher which may cause damage to trees, limbs, power lines and some structures in the next 12 to 48 hours.

Freeze Watch

Issued when conditions are favorable for widespread temperatures at or below freezing during the local growing season.

Wind Advisory

Issued when sustained winds of 30 to 39 mph are expected for 1 hour or longer, OR for wind gusts of 45 to 60 mph for any duration within the next 12 to 36 hours.

Frost Advisory

Issued when nighttime minimum temperatures are expected to range from 33°F to 36°F in the local growing season, resulting in the development of widespread frost.

Dense Fog Advisory

Issued when widespread fog is expected to reduce visibilities to 1/4 mile or less, causing a hazard to motorists.

Freezing Fog Advisory

Issued when light fog (*visibility greater than 0.25 mile*) combines with temperatures of 32°F or colder to produce a hazardous formation of ice on roadways and/or bridges (*also known as “Black Ice”*).

High Wind Warning

Issued when sustained winds of 40 mph or more are expected for 1 hour or longer, or for wind gusts (not from thunderstorms) around 60 mph or higher which may cause damage to trees, limbs, power lines and some structures in the next 24 hours.

Freeze Warning

Issued when widespread nighttime low temperatures are expected to reach 32°F or lower in the local growing season. They are usually issued to highlight the first few freezes of the fall or unusually late freezes in the spring